

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CCO-00 DOTE-00
EB-08 H-01 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 SP-02 OC-06 PRS-01
SS-15 USSS-00 SY-05 FAA-00 WRDE-00 MCT-01 SCS-03
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1548

AMEMBASSY DACCA NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 15047

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, EAIR, JA, BG

SUBJECT: JAL HIJACKING: JAPANESE THINKING ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH
HIJACKERS

1. FONOFF HIJACKING OPERATIONS GROUP OFFICIAL (AOKI)
OFFERED FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO EMBOFF ON CONFIDENTIAL
BASIS ON GOJ STRATEGY AND TACTICS IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH
HIJACKERS ON JAL 742 IN DACCA:

--DECISION HAD BEEN MADE AT 0300 MEETING, TODAY
OF PRIME MINISTER AND CONCERNED CABINET OFFICIALS
TO CAST JAPANESE RESPONSE TO HIJACKERS' DEMANDS IN
POSITIVE BUT DELIBERATELY VAGUE TERMS, HOLDING OUT PROMISE
OF COMPLETE ACCESSION TO HIJACKERS' DEMANDS WHILE
DELAYING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. PHRASING OF GOJ STATEMENTS
TO HIJACKERS HAS BEEN APPROPRIATELY AMBIGUOUS ALONG LINES
OF "WE UNDERSTAND VERY WELL YOUR REQUESTS AND WILL
CONSIDER AND ACT ON THEM IN A POSITIVE MANNER."

--THUS FAR NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HIJACKERS AND
JAPANESE AMBASSADOR IN DACCA HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED THROUGH
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BANGLADESH INTERMEDIARY SPEAKING IN ENGLISH. BANGLADESH
AND JAPANESE OFFICIALS APPARENTLY FEAR THAT DIRECT VOICE
CONTACT IN JAPANESE WOULD ANTAGONIZE HIJACKERS.

--AOKI STATED THAT RELEASE OF FIVE PASSENGERS HAD
BEEN AT INITIATIVE OF HIJACKERS, WHO HAD THEN BROKEN
COMMUNICATIONS WITH DACCA TOWER BECAUSE OF FATIGUE.

JAPANESE DO NOT KNOW WHEN COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE RESUMED.

--GOJ AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO RELEASE ALL OF NINE PRISONERS DEMANDED BY HIJACKERS. THEY NOTE THAT SOME ARE COMMON CRIMINALS WITH NO RECORD OF PAST CONNECTIONS TO JAPAN RED ARMY. WHEN THIS FACT WAS POINTED OUT TO HIJACKERS, THEY REPLIED ONLY THAT ALL NINE WERE CONSIDERED "HEROES" OF ACTIVE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM.

--IT WILL BE MOST UNLIKELY THAT GOJ WILL BE ABLE TO MEET 18 HOUR DEADLINE SET BY HIJACKERS FOR TECHNICAL REASONS. NINE PRISONERS WITHIN JAPAN ARE SCATTERED IN DIFFERENT PRISONS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. FURTHERMORE, TIME IS REQUIRED TO MARK \$100 NOTES OF 6 MILLION DOLLAR RANSOM.

--GOJ HAS NOT YET DECIDED ON COMPOSITION OF SPECIAL PARTY TO BE SENT TO DACCA. PARTY WOULD PRESUMABLY INCLUDE FONOFF OFFICIALS, NEW JAL FLIGHT CREW, AND POLICE OFFICERS TO ACCOMPANY ANY OF NINE PRISONERS RELEASED. (EARLIER PLANS TO SEND PARTY OF FONOFF OFFICIALS AND JAL CREW ON EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 28 WERE CANCELLED TO SEE HOW SITUATION DEVELOPED IN DACCA.) BANGLADESH OFFICIALS ARE INSISTING THAT PARTY LAND AT DACCA AIRPORT IN NON-JAPANESE CARRIER IN THOUGHT THAT SIGHT OF JAPANESE FLAG PLANE MIGHT AROUSE HIJACKERS.
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--AOKI STATED THAT ANY POLICE OFFICERS SENT IN JAPANESE PARTY WOULD HAVE TASK OF GUARDING RELEASED PRISONERS AND WOULD NOT BE USED IN ANY TACTICAL RESCUE OPERATION AGAINST HIJACKERS. HE STATED THAT GOJ WOULD BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE SELECTED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AS HOSTAGES IN EXCHANGE FOR PASSENGERS SHOULD SITUATION REQUIRE IT. PLAINCLOTHES POLICE WOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN ANY SUCH EXCHANGE AS THEY WOULD BE "EASILY RECOGNIZABLE TO HIJACKERS." (POLICE SOURCES HAVE ALSO INFORMED EMBASSY THAT NO TACTICAL OPERATIONS ARE PLANNED AGAINST HIJACKERS).
MANSFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 29-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
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